

# Comprehensive Community Plan



## SPUNE'LUXUTTH' TRIBE

March 2014











# In with the Tide: Spune'luxutth' Vision







The vision statement is the dream of Spune'luxutth' Tribe members and what we believe are the ideal conditions for the community. This vision statement was prepared during Phase 1 and 2 of the Comprehensive Community Plan (CCP) process, and stands true today. The statement below captures the community's aspirations through the CCP process.

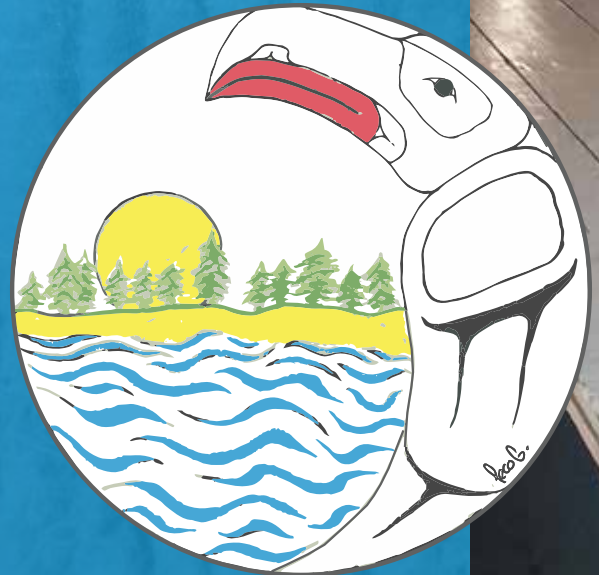
**SPUNE'LUXUTTH'** is a healthy, safe and independent community guided by our **strong culture**. Our **vibrant** local **economy** and our extensive community facilities, services and programs sustain our ***independence, safety, health*** and our people. We **live off the ocean**, and our water and land are ***clean and pristine***. Our **traditional language** and our cultural customs are alive and ***celebrated***, and our **Elders are active and respected** in our community. A ***diversity of housing*** allows our Elders, youth and families to **stay in the community** and grow through different stages of their lives. Members are supported by a strong community that takes ***care of each other***.



## Overview

The vision from our members describes a community that is independent, healthy, housed, educated and living our culture. The desire is to have a vibrant economy, improved infrastructure, appropriate leadership and a clean environment. This discussion of a community vision has helped us shape our goals, more specific objectives and a plan of action.

Community planning is an on-going process. Planning does not end at a certain point, but moves forward through each step and continues as we achieve results in our community. Our plan for the future is comprehensive, touching on the eight inter-related areas of community planning. These areas are all inclusive, directly relating to the themes in our plan.







## Acknowledgements

*Thank you to the 259 community members who participated in Phase 3 of the Comprehensive Community Plan process, including key community groups, staff from across departments, as well as Chief and Council. A special thank you to Anne Crocker and Marion James, the Planning Coordinators who worked very hard leading this process and made sure everyone had an opportunity to be heard.*

*We appreciate Peco George Sr. for creating the logo used for this Comprehensive Community Plan, and the efforts of the poster contest participants who helped us create a colourful and attractive plan that represents us. The ocean and the land when stewarded, will sustain our lives as Spune'luxutth' Mustimuhw. We will have reverence for our land and sea.*





Three phases of the CCP process have been completed to date, most recently to fill gaps and prepare this guiding document to direct future implementation. Our journey as it relates to the overall CCP process is presented in the figure below. This is our first iteration of the CCP process, and we recognize that this is a living document meaning that it can be adjusted as the community changes and grows.

These phases in our journey are described briefly, including the extensive community engagement along the way.

**Phase 4 –**  
Monitoring  
and Evaluation  
(Future)



**Phase 1 –**  
Getting Ready  
and Pre-  
Planning  
2008-2009

**Phase 3 –**  
Filling in the  
Gaps and  
Implementation  
2013-2014

**Phase 2 –**  
Where We Are  
and Planning  
for How We  
Will Get There  
2011-2012



## **Phase 1: Getting Ready and Pre-Planning (2008-2009)**

In the first phase of the CCP process, community members were invited to participate in a number of events including a community open house, two adult workshops, two youth workshops and an Elder workshop. In addition, community members completed four surveys to gather input about our future. We worked with community members to complete our community profile, gather information about our situation, learn about the strengths and issues of our community, and talk about our current and future land uses. We also revealed our priorities and brainstormed solutions as part of our visioning process.

## **Phase 2: Where We Are and Planning for How We Will Get There (2011-2012)**

The second phase built on the initial phase of work, bringing it all together into key themes and actions. The focus was a community workshop, held to gather participant's thoughts, concerns and ideas. This helped narrow down the issues and opportunities being addressed in the CCP. Stations were set up to guide each participant through key questions. A high level summary was prepared.

## **Phase 3: Filling in the Gaps and Implementation (2013-2014)**

The third (current) phase of the CCP was held this year, again building on the previous phases of work. This process has been community led, with on-the-ground staff who are part of Penelakut. Ideas were brought forward from extensive community consultation, and future actions will be owned by community members.

## **Phase 4: Monitoring and Evaluation (Future)**

The next phase in the process will be Monitoring and Evaluation, to ensure that the action items set out in this plan are implemented within the specified timeframe.



# PENELAKUT TODAY

## Our Successes

We have seen a number of successes in the community, some took place prior to the CCP process and many were initiated after the start of the planning activities in 2008.

This includes:

- A community-wide vision
- Emergency services by volunteer first responders
- Fire protection provided by 23 volunteer fire fighters
- Tsussie Road bridge
- Tsussie community sewer system
- Partial completion of longhouse
- Six-plex family dwelling
- Soccer field
- Teaching of Hul'qumi'num language in school
- Landfill closure
- Household garbage pick-up and recycling program

Significant community wide involvement during phase 3 is also a huge success!







*I liked to see that some things have changed  
and improved over the last few years*

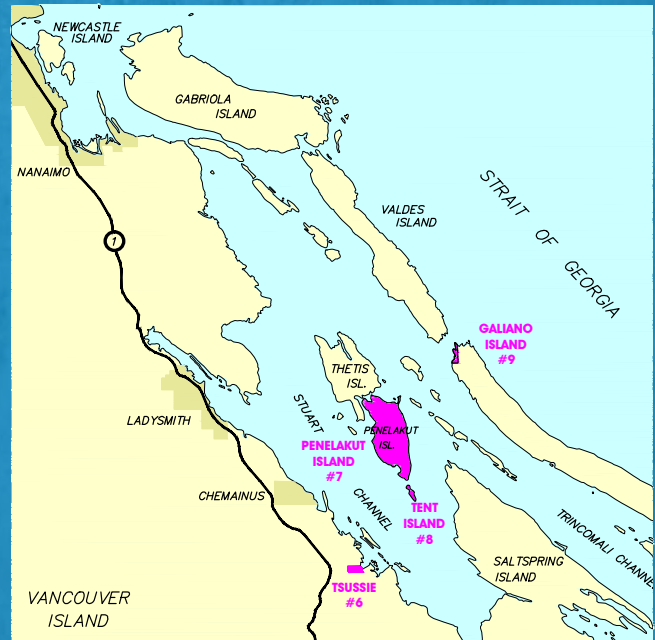


## Penelakut Community

In 2014, Penelakut Tribe has 918 registered members and 55% of our members live within our community. Three of our reserves are located within the Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD). Galiano Island 9 is part of the Capital Regional District (CRD). Penelakut Island 7 is our largest reserve at approximately 557 hectares. There are currently 105 homes on the Island with a population of about 500 people.

There are two main areas of development on Penelakut Island which are commonly identified as the East Village and West Village. The East Village has 62 homes and our Big House is situated amongst the homes. Our new longhouse, elementary school, administration office, medical clinic, adult education building, day care facility, BC Ferry landing as well as 43 homes are located in West Village. We rely on BC Ferries service to access our community on Penelakut Island.

Tsussie 6 is located on Vancouver Island approximately 5 km southeast of the town of Chemainus. There are approximately 100 people living in 22 homes in this 16 hectare community. Both Tent Island 8 and Galiano Island 9 are currently undeveloped.





# OUR FUTURE

## Key Themes

To guide our vision, we created a set of eight key themes to focus our efforts. Together, these themes guide our comprehensive approach to community planning. Each of these themes has specific goals, and objectives (corresponding actions) to help achieve these goals, based on feedback from community members. Six of these themes areas were created during the previous phase of the CCP, and two were added to close major gaps and prepare a comprehensive approach to community planning into the future.



“ *It's important for us to share and teach our culture to our young people keeping in mind to protect it too* ”



# 8 THEMES GUIDING OUR PLANNING PROCESS





# Protect Our Lands and Resources

## Context

Our land provides us with food, fresh water, beaches, ocean views, wildlife, and a place to live. It connects us to our ancestors, and is the basis upon which our community can grow and prosper. Each of these contributes to our vibrant community.

Community members have identified threats to this unique natural environment including littering, logging and a lack of reliable affordable energy supply. Traditional foods, once abundant, have been damaged by pollution. There is concern of the quality and reliability of our water supply.

Recognizing these threats and the need for immediate action, we have taken some important steps in the last few years to better protect our land and resources. This includes the clean-up and closure of the landfill, a newly established recycling program and the hazardous waste transfer facility.

## Desired Direction

Protecting the beauty and our natural environment now is essential for the future of our community. We will ensure that clean water is available for future generations. We will focus our attention on energy opportunities that promote sustainability and self-sufficiency. We will encourage our youths to be good stewards of the environment. Identifying environmentally sensitive areas will allow us to protect sites of importance, and ensure future housing is placed appropriately. Additional efforts are also needed to manage waste.

Our land and resources also support other goals such as economic self-reliance and community safety.





*Protecting our natural resources*



## Goals

Our highest priority goals, to protect our lands and resources, are as follows:

1. Reduce water and energy consumption
2. Remove litter and pollution
3. Reduce solid waste
4. Promote environmental stewardship
5. Increase site protection



# Ensure Community Health and Safety

## Context

Health and safety are essential for the well-being and growth of the community. It allows our people to live to their fullest capacity. Members identified their families and friends as an important strength of our community. “Tsitsu’watul, our members help and support each other”. Our health service is provided under the Tripartite Health Partnership Accord between First Nation Health Council, Health Canada and the Province of BC. Penelakut is also part of the Hul’quimi’num Health organization which support the health and well-being of our members. We receive policing from the RCMP. Our Volunteer Fire Department on Penelakut Island responds to emergencies and provides fire protection in the community. The Crofton Fire Department provides fire protection to our members on Tsussie. Our Emergency Preparedness Plan outlines strategies for us to respond to many types of emergencies, protect our infrastructure and manage the aftermath of events.

Our community is threatened by poverty, addictions, loss of culture, poor health and crime. Living by the ocean means that flooding is also an ongoing challenge. The legacy of the residential school system has led to mistrust, and many health and social services offered have been underutilized in the past. There has also been a breakdown of traditional family structures. These challenges have led to a loss of community unity.

## Desired Direction

When asked what comes to mind when thinking about health, there is a clear desire for improved health support programs, such as Elder’s health services, mental health services, home support, and suicide prevention. We have an opportunity to tackle addictions and improve health in our community through programming and policy. Programs focused on healing, connecting with culture and intergenerational learning could help build our community’s capacity to help one another. Transportation to and from medical services would be extremely valuable to members.





*We have to take care of ourselves and  
fix ourselves from inside*



## Goals

Our highest priority goals, to enhance community health and safety, are as follows:

- |  |                             |
|--|-----------------------------|
| 1. Increase health support programs    | 6. Reduce crime             |
| 2. Practice traditional medicine       | 7. Improve road safety      |
| 3. Increase access to medical services | 8. Ensure safe water supply |
| 4. Reduce addiction                    | 9. Mitigate flooding        |
| 5. Promote healthy living              | 10. Protect animal welfare  |



# Become More Economically Self-Reliant

## Context

A vibrant local economy is a key part of Penelakut's vision, and directly supports community independence and self-sufficiency. We are blessed with many resources that could be mobilized for local economic development projects. The main economies in the broader areas of North Cowichan and the Gulf Islands are aquaculture, fishing, agriculture, forestry, and tourism. There are opportunities for Penelakut to focus efforts in these areas, and it is clear that members are supportive of building a strong local economy and creating job opportunities within the community.

Economic development projects previously undertaken by the community include oyster farming, clam harvesting, a motel, a store at the West Village, and selective logging on Penelakut Island. Resources have become increasingly limited in recent years, which is evident through the decline in Penelakut's fishing and hunting practices. This has resulted in chronic unemployment and had serious effects across the community. There are also other barriers to community development including a lack of funding, capacity and leadership.

## Desired Direction

Creating jobs is the number one priority for the community. Purchasing land had the most support from members as a possible endeavour to create business opportunities outside the community. There is also a desire to open the community to economic development for non-members such as capitalizing on the tourism market and pursue funding from government programs for community growth and development. To supplement economic development, education, training and capacity building of our members is also needed. We would like our youths to return to our community after they have completed their education and be able to find employment locally.





## Goals

Our highest priority goals, to achieve economic self-reliance, are as follows:

1. Create jobs
2. Reduce dependence on outside resources
3. Increase local economic activity
4. Expand local base of economy-building skills and knowledge
5. Reduce financial strain



# Build Community Capacity and Relationships

## Context

Building community capacity and relationships means focusing internally (within our community) as well as externally (looking to our neighbours). Our most immediate neighbour is the Municipality of North Cowichan (specifically Chemanius and Crofton) in the Cowichan Valley Regional District. Both governments have expressed a commitment to working with us to ensure sustainable development as part of their community planning processes. There is a desire for stronger unity in our community and our members to take pride in our traditions and our identity.

There is a lot of interest from the community for activities, programs and community facilities which will grow relationships both internally and externally. This is an important stepping stone for making changes.

## Desired Direction

Building our capacity as a community, by better supporting each other, will strengthen the unity of our community. This includes engaging Elders and youth, going back to our original ways of using the longhouse, holding Elders' gatherings and community events, and sharing our food. There is the desire to focus our attention on the future by improving education, addressing threats to community health and safety, and strengthening our Government.

Community members have identified a variety of external relationships that need improvement, with the most commonly expressed being School District 79, Health Canada, and BC Ferries. We can build stronger relationships with our neighbours by combining and sharing resources, bringing our people together through sports and events, and improving communication.





## Goals

Our highest priority goals, to build community capacity and relationships, are as follows:

1. Hold more frequent community gatherings
2. Build community pride
3. Increase youth and elder opportunities for community engagement
4. Reduce community conflict
5. Increase local food production
6. Grow relationship with neighbouring communities



# Expand Community Infrastructure

## Context

Our infrastructure is the foundation for providing key services to community members and enables economic development. Our 6 community buildings on Penelakut Island allow us to provide services such as health care, education, childcare, administration. Our homes need care. Major housing challenges include shortage of homes for members in the community, overcrowding, a lack of quality and diversity, and a need for Elders live-in facilities. Both Penelakut Island and Tsussie are serviced by community water and sewer systems. Tsussie has municipal servicing agreement with Halalt First Nation for provision of water to the homes and Municipality of North Cowichan for sewage disposal.

We have taken significant steps to expand our community infrastructure, on both Penelakut Island and Tsussie. Tsussie Road bridge was built to provide secure access to the community. A community sewer system was constructed on Tsussie to mitigate ongoing health and safety hazards. The longhouse has been partially completed. A six-plex family dwelling was built to house more of our members. We also have a great soccer field. These are huge accomplishments, and contribute greatly to the quality of life in our community.

## Desired Direction

Caring for our new infrastructure will be an important part to ensure that these assets are in good condition to provide continual services to the community. Our members expressed a desire for more community facilities including completing the construction of the longhouse. Members have also expressed a desire for new homes that would serve a diversity of groups in the community through the different stages of their life. This would enable our members to age in the community, and show our youth that there are suitable places for them to return home to.





## Goals

Our highest priority goals, to expand our community infrastructure, are as follows:

1. Increase housing supply, diversity and quality
2. Improve transportation options
3. Build community facilities
4. Improve water/sewer/drainage servicing to accommodate growth
5. Care for our existing infrastructure



# Celebrate our Language and Traditions

## Context

Penelakut comes from the Hul'qumi'num name, Spune'luxutth', which means 'log buried on the beach'. It has been said that Penelakut people are helpful, athletic and have a strong culture. We are Coast Salish people, for thousands of years we have lived off the ocean, fished from Bonsall Creek and harvested along the tidal flats at the mouth of River. Hul'qumi'num has been spoken by our people for generations. Our traditions and language are key elements that support our culture, and we want to continue to live our culture across generations, from our young to our Elders.

Our tradition of passing culture and language orally from one generation to another has been weakened by social pressures, modern media and imposed educational programs. The residential school system had taken away our language and our culture. Less than 5% of our current population speaks Hul'qumi'num.

Our strengths, which support community traditions and language, include strong cultural beliefs, a history of living off the ocean and our new longhouse.

## Desired Direction

Our dependence on outside resources has grown, and our young members are less exposed to our knowledge and traditions. This has led to a loss of language and culture, and consequently a lack of youth engagement and community unity as a whole. Traditions such as our celebratory feasts have changed because traditional foods, such as duck soup, are gone. We will promote and revive our traditions and language through programming, documenting our past, and intergenerational sharing. We will celebrate our culture and instil pride in our language.





*I would like to protect our way of life, culture and teachings*



## Goals

Our highest priority goals, to celebrate our language and traditions, are as follows:

1. Share our culture and traditions
2. Support intergenerational initiatives
3. Document our history and traditional activities
4. Increase number of native language speakers



# Strengthen our Government

## Context

The elections in Penelakut are conducted under the election provision of the Indian Act, and as such the tenure of office is two years. We are governed by a Chief and nine Councillors. We are part of the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group and are currently at Stage Four of a six-stage settlement process.

There is a feeling from membership that strong leadership and appropriate policies are needed to guide decision-making and carry out strategies and plans into action. Respect from the membership, and for each other, has been low. In terms of future self-government, further conversations are needed to identify a preferred direction for the community. It is clear that strength of our government is needed for our community to grow. This could include a possible shift in the election system such as fair representation from the elected areas.

The widespread community input has done a lot to improve communication and establish a foundation upon which to strengthen our government. Administration has been working hard to build capacity, for example through finance, and has been very positive and supportive of community endeavours.

## Desired Direction

Community members would like to see longer terms of office to provide more consistency and future governing body to support development of economic opportunities. Many would also like to see establishment of our own laws, and continued exploration of Federal funding. In addition, there is a feeling that the Penelakut government should have authority over key services such as education, child and family matters, health care, local laws, as well as the management of our lands and resources. Members provided many suggestions for helping strengthen government, the two most prominent of which were carrying out strategies/plans into actions and improving communication with members.





## Goals

Our highest priority goals, to strengthen our government, are as follows:

1. Improve governing structure and capacity
2. Build external relationships
3. Expand authority over local services
4. Strengthen relationship with Chief and Council
5. Share knowledge between departments



# Improve Education

## Context

Education is important to our community now and in the future, not only for our children but also for our adults. This includes formal training through the school system, but also expanding our knowledge of the Hul'qumi'num language and our community culture.

Youth disengagement/boredom is a recurring challenge in our community, and while this is generally associated with a need for more recreation and extra-curricular activities, it does affect education. Our older youth have to go off-Island to attend High School. In addition, there is a significant lack of trades and business related skills within the community. Providing career planning will help our youths to be better prepared for education and training after high school graduation.

We are very proud of our Elementary School - located on Penelakut Island. The school community believes that it is important to establish a caring, supportive and academic environment. We also have a successful learning centre with programs for adult education.

## Desired Direction

Our members expressed that providing skills training to the community, in particular offering trade and technology courses as well as continuing education, as high priorities. There was also a lot of interest in education around our language, our culture and our traditional practices.



“Our children are gifts from the Creator who need our nourishment and guidance. Penelakut Education will support quality programs that promote the Hul’qumi’num culture and language. We will strive to educate our children to be independent, life-long learners, who contribute to the growth of the Penelakut Tribe’s vision of a self-governed society.

~Penelakut Education – Mission Statement



## Goals

Our highest priority goals, to improve education, are as follows:

1. Strengthen traditional practices
2. Support career planning
3. Offer local trades and technology training
4. Promote youth education
5. Support continuing education



# PLAN OF ACTION

The top 10 goals are as follows. These have been listed in order of priority, as identified by the community through consultation.

1. Create jobs
2. Expand local base of economy-building skills and knowledge
3. Grow youth education
4. Strengthen relationship with Chief and Council
5. Offer local trades and technology training
6. Increase the number of native language speakers
7. Promote healthy living
8. Increase youth and elder opportunities for community engagement
9. Increase housing supply, diversity and quality
10. Support continuing education

These priorities will be used to direct implementation of specific action items identified during Phases 1, 2 and 3 in the CCP process.



***Our education and cultural teachings should be taught  
as early as when the baby is still in the womb***









# Comprehensive Community Plan

March 2014



## Penelakut Tribe

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